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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

2 March 1951

SUBJECT: NIE-29: YUGOSLAVIA
Suggested revision, Conclusions

7. If the Kremlin contemplates eventual military conquest of Yugoslavia, it may estimate that the risks involved in such action would be less, and the advantages therefrom greater, in 1951 than at any later date.

8. If the Kremlin decides to attack Yugoslavia in 1951, it may employ Soviet and Satellite forces jointly, or Satellite forces alone with "unofficial" Soviet support as necessary. The Kremlin might hope that a joint Soviet-Satellite attack would achieve such prompt and decisive results as to confront the Western Powers with a fait accompli before they could effectively intervene, and that US opinion would not countenance atomic war in behalf of Tito. The Kremlin probably would nevertheless estimate that the direct participation of Soviet forces would involve very grave risk of general war. Therefore it probably would employ Soviet forces directly only if it were fully prepared to accept general war.

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9. The Kremlin might estimate that an attack by Satellite forces alone, with only "unofficial" Soviet support, would involve considerably less risk of general war. It might estimate that the Western Powers would so strongly desire to keep the conflict "localized" that they would neither intervene militarily nor attempt to implicate the USSR officially. The Kremlin might further estimate that even if a Satellite attack provoked vigorous Western reaction, it could still avoid serious risk of general war either by calling off the Satellites or by negotiating a settlement.

10. We therefore believe that if the Kremlin decides to launch an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951, it will openly employ Satellite forces only, but will render "unofficial" Soviet assistance as required. Although the Kremlin might hope and believe that an attack by the Satellites alone would not result in general war, it would nevertheless probably estimate that such action involved substantial risk of general war. We therefore believe that a Satellite attack would be undertaken only if the Kremlin were prepared to accept ^{such risk.} ~~general war.~~

11. Although there is no reliable evidence as to whether or not a decision to launch an attack on Yugoslavia in 1951 has been reached, we believe that the scope of continuing Satellite military and propaganda preparations and the possible advantages which the Kremlin might see in such a course of action requires that an attack be considered a real possibility.

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